SPORT

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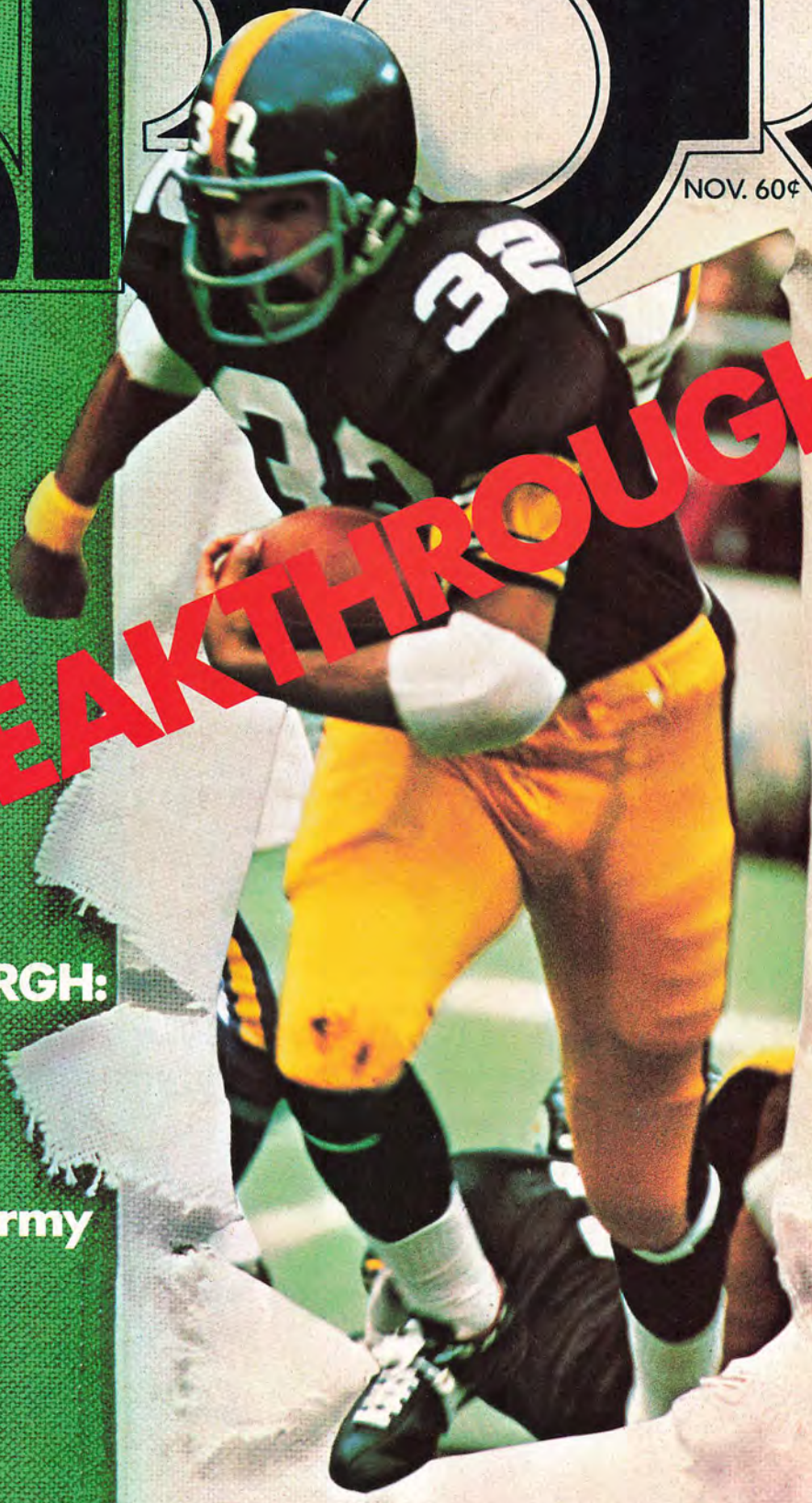

BREAKTHROUGH

IN PITTSBURGH: Franco Harris And His Italian Army

Anthony Davis: The Second Year A.D.

Jimmy Breslin Tells The NY Giants Where To Go

Dave Bing: A Blurred Vision

Plus: Larry L.King's Confessions Of A Washed-up Quarterback

SPORT

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COVER CREDIT

Franco Harris JERRY WACHTER

Entered as Second Class Matter July 25, 1946, at the Post Office at New York, N.Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879. Second Class Postage paid at New York, N.Y., and other Post Offices. Authorized as Second Class Mail. P.O. Dept. Ottawa, Ont., Canada, and for payments of postage in cash. Copyright 1973 by Macfadden-Bartell Corporation, a subsidiary of Bartell Media Corporation. All rights reserved. Copyright under the Universal Copyright Convention and International Copyright Convention. Copyright reserved under the Pan-American Copyright Convention. Todos derechos reservados segun la Convencion Panamericana de Propiedad Literaria y Artistica. Title trademark registered in U.S. Patent Office.

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EDITOR

AL BRAVERMAN
ART DIRECTOR

NORMAN LEWIS SMITH
MANAGING EDITOR

MARTY BELL
ASSISTANT MANAGING EDITOR

KEVIN FITZGERALD
PHOTO EDITOR

PAULA HOLLANDER
ASSISTANT ART DIRECTOR

LINDA FORCHT
LARRY GRUBMAN
DAVID PERRY
KATIE WIMPFHEIMER
EDITORIAL ASSISTANTS

JOHN NORWOOD
PUBLISHER

RICHARD E. VINCENT
ADVERTISING MANAGER

Contributing Editors: Jimmy Breslin, Gary Cartwright, John Devaney, Tom Dowling, Pete Gent, Jeff Greenfield, Arnold Hano, Paul Hemphill, Don Kowet, Allan Roth, Gene Shalit.

Contributing Photographers: Daniel S. Baliotti, John Biever, Vernon J. Biever, Martin Blumenthal, Bruce Curtis, Malcom Emmons, Fred Kaplan, David Maenza, Darryl Norenberg, Bob Peterson, Dick Raphael, Manny Rubio, David Sutton, Ozzie Sweet, Jerry Wachter.

Sport, Published Monthly by Macfadden-Bartell Corporation, a subsidiary of Bartell Media Corporation, New York, N.Y.

Executive, Advertising and Editorial Offices at 205 East 42nd Street, New York, N.Y. Albert S. Traina, President, Macfadden Publications, Inc., John Norwood, Vice President and Publisher; Louis W. Fusco, Vice President, Marketing Director; Lloyd C. Jamieson, Vice President-Advertising and Marketing; Richard E. Vincent, Advertising Manager. Advertising offices also at 221 N. La Salle Street, Chicago, Illinois and 6290 Sunset Blvd., Los Angeles, Calif. 90028.

Subscription Rates: U.S. & Possessions, one year, $6.00; two years, $11.00; three years, $16.00. Add $.50 per subscription year for Canada. All other countries, $7.00 per year.

Change of Address: Eight weeks' notice essential. When possible, please furnish a stencil impression address from a recent issue. Address changes can be made only if you send us your old as well as your new address. Write to SPORT, Macfadden-Bartell Corporation, a subsidiary of Bartell Media Corporation, 153-01 10th Avenue, Whitestone, N.Y. 11357.

Manuscripts, Drawings and Photographs should be accompanied by addressed envelopes and return postage and will be carefully considered but publisher cannot be responsible for loss or injury.

Foreign editions handled through International Division of Macfadden-Bartell Corporation, a subsidiary of Bartell Media Corporation, 205 East 42nd Street, New York, N.Y. Albert S. Traina, President; Louis W. Fusco, Sales Director.

NOV. THIS MONTH IN SPORT

DAVE ANDERSON

Dave Anderson, the author of our cover story on Franco Harris, is a very fine sportswriter. But, more important, he is an immensely decent human being. I have never heard anyone say an unkind word about Dave Anderson. In a business where sniping is as common as in a Cambodian jungle, this is remarkable.

Anderson now writes a sports column for The New York *Times*. Earlier in his career, he worked for The New York *Sun*, The Brooklyn *Eagle* and The New York *Journal-American*, all of which are now defunct, through no fault of his. Dave had the distinction of being the last man to cover the Brooklyn Dodgers for The Brooklyn *Eagle*. It is unlikely that either institution will be revived.

Dave's latest book is *Always on the Run*, written in collaboration with Jim Kiick and Larry Csonka. Previously, he wrote *Sugar Ray*, with Ray Robinson, and *Countdown to Super Bowl*, a brilliant hour-by-hour study of the days leading up to Joe Namath's Super Bowl.

Many of Dave's best writing efforts have gone into stories about Namath. He was in Lenox Hill Hospital when Joe underwent emergency knee surgery after his 1971 injury. He was in Bachelors III when Joe announced his temporary retirement from pro football in 1969. And he was in Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania, for "Joe Namath Day" shortly after the Super Bowl victory.

I think it is safe to say that Dave Anderson is Joe Namath's favorite newspaperman. Namath considers Anderson honest, diligent and, most of the time, even accurate. I can't imagine higher praise from a sterner critic of the press.

Jimmy Breslin, back in SPORT with his article on the New York Giants, used to work with Dave Anderson on the *Journal-American*. While Anderson cultivated friends, Breslin cultivated enemies and debts. He says he will match his enemies against Anderson's friends any day. He says he will match his debts against anyone's. Breslin considers all rich people, including the owners of the Giants, his natural enemies.

He is about to become his own best enemy. His novel, *World Without End, Amen*, is a big best-seller, with paperback and movie soon to follow.

Larry L. King, who offers blighted memories of his quarterbacking days in this issue, is one of the most talented and versatile journalists in the U.S. He has written memorable articles about William Buckley and Lyndon Johnson, Buck Owens and Louis Armstrong, Bobby Jones University and Texas semi-pro football.

His own football talents carried him to tryouts at Fordham University and at Texas Tech, both of which he flunked. He will be a visiting professor of journalism at Princeton University this year, and his decision to retire from quarterbacking is the best thing to happen to Ivy League football in years.

Dick Schaap

TWO NFL ROOKIES: Big John & Little Richie

BY DAVID ISRAEL

If there is a God, and He knows what He is doing, He will reach down one day and strip Pete Rozelle of his title as commissioner of the National Football League. Then, in His infinite wisdom, He will annoint Rozelle His personal public relations man. Within a decade, He will probably reign supreme, as He once did, over Sundays—and if He is lucky, He will even become as big as Monday-night football.

Pete Rozelle is the high priest of the predominant religion in America today. He has made the Pro Football Hall of Fame more sacred than any multi-spired shrine, the Super Bowl more nervously awaited than Judgment Day. Like any decent high priest, Rozelle knows the value of ritual.

Take, for instance, the annual NFL player draft. It is a production calculated, like almost every move Rozelle makes, to induce maximum media coverage. And, like most Rozelle moves, it works.

All of the other major sports also hold drafts. Major-league baseball has a draft that you can find out about if you study *The Sporting News* carefully. The National Basketball Association has a draft that is held one month after it is scheduled to be held. The two hockey leagues each have one, and each drafts the same pubescent youngsters with the same unpronounceable names.

The Rozelle draft is different.

The NFL draft is a celebration of muscle and speed and all the good old boys Bud and Chris bring you each Saturday afternoon in the fall.

It attracts the cameras and the commentators of all the television networks. It persuades sports columnists to drag themselves out of bed and onto the scene before noontime. It draws fans armed with their own draft lists, and it draws hungry fathers-in-law of obscure tight ends.

It is the baptismal ritual of professional football.

The 1973 NFL draft was held in the Versailles Room of New York's Americana Hotel. More than 500 people were on hand when, a few minutes after ten a.m., January 30, Pete Rozelle stepped to the microphones. "The Houston Oilers," Rozelle announced, "select . . . the first choice of the first round . . . John Matuszak . . . M-A-T-U-S-Z-A-K . . . defensive end . . . University of Tampa."

Before Rozelle had even finished saying the name, a little whoop went up in the back of the Versailles Room. It came from Bob Woolf, the Boston-based sports attorney. Woolf was attending the draft on behalf of several potential draftees, including John Matuszak. As soon as he heard "Mat . . ." Woolf knew something. He knew that, suddenly, he had a star on his hands. He knew that by the end of the day, thanks to the wire services, the afternoon newspapers and the evening television news, the American public would have the name John Matuszak . . . M-A-T-U-S-Z-A-K . . . imprinted on its football mind.

With his simple incantation, opening the ritual of the draft, Pete Rozelle had created a rookie hero.

Several hours later, another rookie, Rich Glover, became a ritual sacrifice.

And all because of what happened on January 30, seven and a half months before the first official kickoff of the season, any dedicated football fan knew right then that John Matuszak, barring an injury, would be a starting member of the 1973 Houston Oilers and that Rich Glover, barring a miracle, would be watching his first pro game from a spot no closer than the bench.

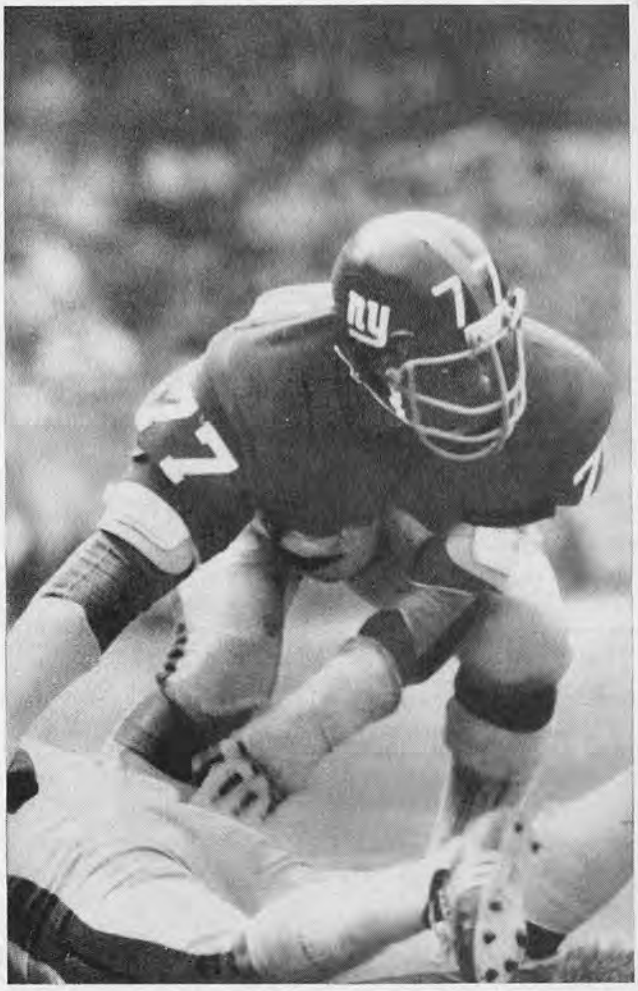
While Rozelle was spelling out the last name of the first draft choice, a name that sounded and even looked like a defensive lineman's, the man who bore the name stood in a newspaper office in Tampa, Florida. Gary Huff, a quarterback from Florida State, and Huff's lawyer were also at the newspaper office, sweating out the draft.

"I was just a defensive lineman," John Matuszak said later. "I didn't think I belonged there."

A few minutes after ten, a loud voice rang out of the newspaper's wire room and told John Matuszak that he belonged.

In 521 Abel Hall, a dormitory on the campus of the University of Nebraska, Rich Glover sprawled on his bed. He had cut classes that morning to wait out the draft. He was certain his call would come early. Rich Glover was one of the three most prominent residents of the capital of Nebraska, a western outpost named Lincoln. The other two were Bob Devaney, the Nebraska football coach, and Johnny Rodgers, the of-

For every 100 fans who knew Rich Glover (left) in college, maybe one knew John Matuszak. But the one was a pro scout.



Big John & Little Richie

CONTINUED

fensive back. Rich Glover was the middle guard. No one knew the governor of Nebraska's name.

Rich Glover burst into the American conciousness on a gray Thursday in November, 1971, in Norman, Oklahoma, during what many people call the greatest college football game ever played—Nebraska vs. Oklahoma. He became one of Bud and Chris's good old boys that day. Before a television audience of 55 million, Glover made 22 tackles. Off one incredible game, he made everybody's All-America team, he clinched the 1972 Outland Trophy awarded to the top collegiate lineman, and he established himself as the greatest middle guard in college football history. In one day, all the essential verities of Rich Glover's ability were projected before the public. The same thing happened to John Matuszak on January 30, 1973. Each man became a national figure on a single day. Rich Glover made it on the football field.

So it was with good reason that Rich Glover expected an early call on January 30.

But there was no early call. After Matuszak, there was Bert Jones of LSU and then Jerry Sisemore of Texas and John Hannah of Alabama and Dave Butz of Purdue. Later, there was Johnny Rodgers and then even Monte Johnson, a second-string tackle for Nebraska. But there was no Rich Glover.

Lunchtime came and Rich Glover was still waiting. Waiting in the dormitory room that he shared with Darryl White, an offensive tackle. Staring at the cinderblock walls painted the institutional orange and yellow. Looking at the barrenness. The No. 1 plaque on the bookcase over his desk, the old football schedules pasted up on the wall.

Rich Glover's smile started to turn down. His bulging frog eyes no longer gleamed. His brow furrowed. Worry, maybe even anger, came into Rich Glover's face. For two years, on the field, he had turned opposing centers empty inside. Now Rich Glover was tasting that feeling himself.

Rich Glover's plans—the good ones of the good life—were slipping away with each passing minute. At home in Jersey City were his mother and four brothers and five sisters. His father had been dead for 12 years, and finally, finally, with the bonus money, Rich had thought, there was going to be only happiness in the Glover home.

But now the bonus money seemed far away.

Finally, at about four p.m. Lincoln time, a long-distance call came from New York. Rich Glover answered. A reporter was on the other end.

"What's happenin'?" Rich asked.

"Not much. You were just drafted by the Giants. On the third round."

"That's alright. I like to go home. But I was lookin' forward to goin' a little higher."

John Matuszak is the perfect John Matuszak. He was created to be the first man taken in the first round. He is six-feet, eight-inches tall. He weighs 282 pounds. And he is designed along the heroic proportions of a Michaelangelo sculpture. There is no fat. The 54-inch chest tapers to a 34-inch waist. The legs can carry the body 40 yards in 4.75 seconds. Magnificently fast.

Even the head is that of a Renaissance sculpture. It is topped by long, curly hair. It is dominated by a long, sharp, but perfectly proportioned nose. The lips are thin, the cheeks drawn tight.

And even the mind is perfect for a football player. And this is no cliché; this is not to deprecate John Matuszak's intelligence. For he is no one's fool. It's just that it takes a rare state of mind to be able to go out each day and inflict pain for a living in the name of sport. And that's what defensive linemen must do to succeed. Use strength to inflict pain on the opposing offensive linemen. Enough pain to make a proud man quit for one play at a time. That's John Matuszak's gift, his ability to use his remarkable body to do that.

"When I get hit good," he says, "when I get popped, it just makes me angry, it exhilirates me, it makes me want to hit more. Some guys start to shy away. They don't want the contact. They won't make it."

But John Matuszak will. He is the stuff of which stars are made.

The day after the draft, Bob Woolf had Matuszak fly into New York from Tampa. Woolf met Matuszak in the Americana lobby, and before taking him to meet the press, he took him up to his hotel room. When they got in the elevator, Matuszak asked the operator for the 23rd floor. The elevator was crowded. People were going to the sixth, 11th and 16th floors. The operator went straight to the 23rd, then came down to the other floors. None of the other riders complained.

Then, after meeting and awing the hard New York press, John Matuszak went out for a walk on Broadway. After walking a couple of blocks toward Times Square, Matuszak reached for his wallet. It wasn't there. He knew what people had told him about New York. He thought he remembered that someone had brushed into him. About a block ahead, a guy was sprinting. Matuszak took off after him. He caught him three blocks later. He

Big John & Little Richie

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grabbed the guy by the shoulder.

"Give me the wallet," he said.

The guy blanched. He reached for the wallet and handed it over. Matuszak let the guy go. The guy, thankful he was still alive, took off.

An hour later, Matuszak returned to his hotel room. His own wallet was lying on his bed.

The incident pained John Matuszak. It had to. It reminded him of his last night as a sophomore football player at the University of Missouri. He was a second-team tight end then, fighting to win a starting position. Colorado was the third game of the season and John still had a chance to become a starter. He was new at Missouri. He came from Fort Dodge, Iowa, Junior College. He went to Fort Dodge because his high-school grades weren't good enough to get him a scholarship at a four-year college.

In the fourth quarter of the game, Missouri was winning big and Matuszak was still charged up. He was getting his chance. He hit one of the Colorado players with a good, clean block. The Colorado player swung at John. Politely, John asked him what the hell he did that for. An official threw both of them out.

That didn't please Dan Devine, the Missouri coach Matuszak was trying to please. Devine told John one more misstep and he was out of school.

That evening, Matuszak went to a fraternity party. He went with a girl he respected very much. It was a celebration of the victory over Colorado, but John didn't drink. At one point, his date left him for a moment to go to the bathroom.

"When she went by," Matuszak remembers, "this derelict Air Force cadet said something to her. When she came back, he grabbed her."

John hit the Air Force cadet twice in the face and left the party while the cadet was lying on the ground. The next day, he found out the cadet had 18 fractures in his face—every bone was busted—and it took ten hours of surgery to set them. He also found out that two punches equalled one more misstep and he was off the team. He was also under indictment.

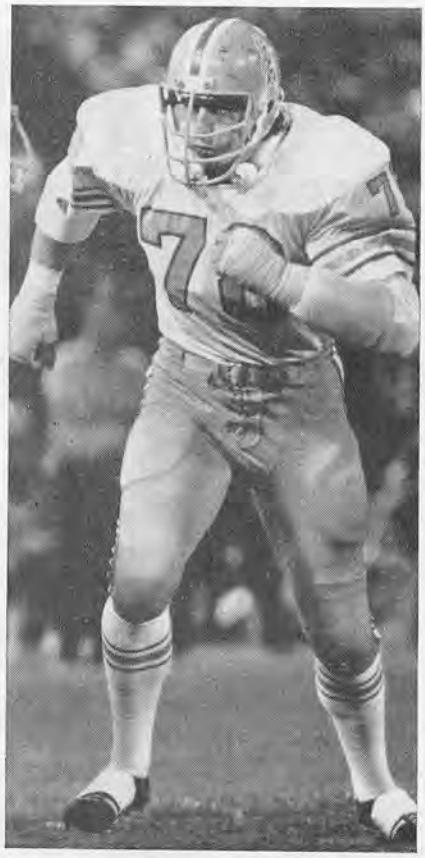
"I wound up with two years probation," Matuszak says. "And I learned to walk away from trouble."

Matuszak spent the two years probation at the University of Tampa learning another valuable lesson: How to play defensive line.

That John Matuszak learned his Florida lessons well was readily apparent to all the football scouts and computers, even if it wasn't to the fans. Even though John Matuszak didn't make any All-America teams —except the one in *Time* magazine chosen by the pro scouts—every pro team, given the chance, would have made him its first choice.

But the value of Matuszak's talents wasn't readily apparent to Sid Gillman, the general manager of the Houston Oilers who drafted him. This is the same Sid Gillman who was later put on probation by Pete Rozelle for dealing pills to the players he coached in San Diego.

Gillman is the man who had to sign John Matuszak. To do this, he had to deal with Bob Woolf. Bob



John Matuszak's size carried him into the starting lineup; Rich Glover's size carried him to the pro sidelines.

Big John & Little Richie

CONTINUED

Woolf knew what to expect for Matuszak. Woolf knew because he had negotiated 700 professional athletic contracts, including those signed by Walt Patulski and Sherman White, a pair of defensive linemen who were the first and second players drafted by the NFL in 1972.

So Bob Woolf was more than surprised when Sid Gillman made an offer right after the draft and said it was non-negotiable. Take it or leave it. The offer was less than the Green Bay Packers, general managed by Matuszak's old friend, Dan Devine, offered the 21st pick in the draft, wide receiver Barry Smith of Florida State, also a Woolf client.

It went on like that for months. No negotiating. No signed contract. Woolf got impatient. So did Matuszak. But Gillman figured he had them good. After all, he reasoned, there hasn't been an AFL for years, what's he gonna play, semi-pro?

And then one day in July, Bob Woolf and John Matuszak were seen walking on a street in Toronto, Canada. They were seen by a newspaper photographer who took a picture that got wide circulation. A Toronto sportswriter wrote a story that Matuszak was negotiating with the Toronto Argonauts.

Within 24 hours, Sid Gillman was on the phone to Woolf. The conversation went something like this:

"Bob," Sid said, surprise in his voice, "where the hell you been?"

"Canada," said Woolf.

The next day, Bob Woolf was in Houston. He met with Sid Gillman. He flew home that night, John Matuszak's contract settled.

"I was in the middle of Gillman and Woolf," Matuszak said. "Sid would call me up and say, 'Your attorney is not a very good, honest guy.' And I would say, 'Sid, he always says good things about you.'

"That was me they were talking about—my life and money. But now I'm satisfied. Just say I got more than $40,000 a year for four years. I wanted a million dollars, but those years are gone."

Not necessarily. They may be in the future. John Matuszak is the kind of personality who could make millions in endorsements. Only two things could hold him back: Injuries and Houston. He has never been injured, though, so that isn't much of a worry. But then there's Houston. The team is terrible. The city is bad, especially if you want national attention without having to bump off 27 kids. But John Matuszak could overcome Houston. He reminds you very much of a large Joe Namath. Instead of the green Continental, there is a shiny white Grand Prix, there is the natural ability, and there is that confidence that so many mistakenly dismiss as arrogance.

"Like Namath?" John Matuszak echoes. "I'm not as cocky as he is. But give me a year, maybe. . . ."

Rich Glover was drafted lower than he expected for the same reason John Matuszak was drafted so high: Size. Rich Glover is six-foot-one and 240 pounds. All his life he has been a defensive lineman, except for one half of one All-Star game last winter when they put him at linebacker and found out that he was a defensive lineman. And the National Football League computers insist that six-one and 240 pounds is just too small for a defensive tackle, which is what he would have to play in the NFL with its even fronts.

On all but one team, that is. The New York Giants play a four-man front, but with an odd-man alignment. One of the tackles plays on the center's nose, plays middle guard, really, the position that Rich Glover had played better than anyone in college history. The Giants switched from the conventional four-three alignment in 1972. A rookie from Grambling named John Mendenhall who weighs 260 pounds played middle guard for them then.

Glover collected a modest bonus from the Giants, bought himself a Jaguar XJ-6 and decided he would live at his mother's house in Jersey City. He played for the College All-Stars, then reported to the Giants.

Early in the exhibition season, Glover looked good, and when some injuries hit the Giants' defensive line, Mendenhall moved out to end and Glover became a starter—after ten days with the team. In his one start, Glover made eight tackles and assisted on six others. The next week, he was back on the bench. And the week before the final exhibition game, the Giants asked for waivers on Rich Glover. They asked then—instead of waiting till the final cut—because, if he were claimed, he could still be recalled. At least two teams wanted Glover, and the Giants recalled him. They put him on their taxi squad. When the Giants opened their season at Yankee Stadium—against Houston and John Matuszak—Rich Glover was not even in uniform. He was a spectator.

In a novel called *The One-Eyed Man*, written by Larry L. King, one of the major characters knocks on a door and, to his surprise, the door is opened by an uncommonly beautiful woman. "Male and female," says the man, "He created them all. But sometimes He lost His head and got carried away with His work. Praised be His name."

John Matuszak is Pete Rozelle's perfect creation.

Rich Glover will have to work it out for himself. ■